

Courtney Cruse Takes the Reins as the 2007 Youth Leader.

By Tafra Blosser

Courtney Cruse can't imagine a day without horses.

The 17-year-old resident of Pilot Point, Texas, has been around horses for as long as she can remember. As the daughter of a horse trainer, it's easy to understand why.



She grew up competing, and has accumulated 823 points as a youth competitor. This year her main mount is Cool Kinda Cloud, otherwise known as “Zinc.”

Courtney attends Pilot Point High School and will be a senior this fall. After high school, she wants to attend Baylor University in Waco, Texas, to study medicine and plans to one day be a nurse practitioner. She also plans on competing with the equestrian team, of course.

Q How'd you get involved with Appaloosas?

A I'd say the main reason is because my dad is a horse trainer.

Q What's your favorite memory with an Appaloosa?

A Last year at Youth World when I won junior geldings with Listen Up, also known as “Snuzzles.” That was awesome because it was my first halter class win and I'd have to say I worked hard for it.

Q What do you compete in?

A Everything—halter to western to hunt seat to heritage.

Q How long have you been involved in AYA?

A About 11 years.

Q Do you have a goal for the AYA this year?

A To try to get more people involved in the industry.

Q What's the best benefit the AYA has to offer?

A It's a great learning experience that teaches you about life and responsibility. And you get to meet all kinds of people.

Q What three words describe you best?

A Outgoing, friendly and dedicated.